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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PORT AU PRINCE 002169

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR
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STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
TREASURY FOR JEFFREY LEVINE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/30/2011

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNARR](#) [MARR](#) [KJUS](#) [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: A/S PATTERSON PUSHES FOR COOPERATION WITH GOH

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for reasons
1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. INL A/S Anne W. Patterson urged increased cooperation on law enforcement and intelligence gathering to combat narcotics trafficking through Haiti during her meetings on November 3 with President Preval and senior GoH and MINUSTAH officials. Repeatedly referring to the 1997 illicit maritime drug traffic agreement between the U.S. and Haiti, Preval indicated that he expected the U.S. to prevent drugs entering Haiti and evinced impatience with and less-than-thorough understanding of the need for bilateral cooperation to conduct interdictions. A/S Patterson re-iterated that successful international counter-narcotics efforts were the result of painstaking and long-term collaboration. She also urged the GoH to consider ways to remove Haitian narcotics trafficking suspects to the U.S. in the absence of a legal instrument to extradite Haitian nationals from Haiti. The Minister of Justice replied that the matter was "under consideration." The director general of the Haitian National Police (HNP), Mario Andresol, reported that he had initiated a process to "certify" the identity of each HNP officer in the field; UN-led vetting and certification of HNP officers would begin with the completion of that process, starting with himself. He explained that HNP special units accompany MINUSTAH forces on patrol in Cite Soleil, but estimated that he needed 250 officers stationed in Cite Soleil to maintain a permanent presence. MINUSTAH officials thanked A/S Patterson for assistance to UNPol and the HNP and asked her to provide more Creole speaking American UNPol officers. The generally good news A/S Patterson received on the security front, from preparations for upcoming elections to the improving situation in Cite Soleil, reflects progress made by the HNP under Andresol and the indispensable impact of our INL programs. The disjointed exchange with Preval, however, illustrates the need for determined diplomacy at the highest levels of the GoH to provide a realistic picture of how meaningful counter-narcotics cooperation must proceed. End Summary.

President Preval

¶2. (C) A/S Patterson, accompanied by the Ambassador, Polcouns, and post's Senior Police Advisor, met on November 3 with President Preval, Prime Minister Alexis, and Minister

of Justice Magloire at the presidential palace. A/S Patterson highlighted the importance of the USG assistance to the police and praised the leadership of DG Andresol. She stressed the importance of proceeding with vetting of HNP officers, and argued for closer cooperation among the GoH, the HNP, and DEA and U.S. law enforcement to develop intelligence against powerful trafficking organizations within Haiti. To that end, she urged the GoH to consider ways to transfer Haitian nationals indicted in the U.S. to face U.S. justice, not only to remove the threat they posed to Haiti, but to develop further intelligence to use against other traffickers. A/S Patterson stressed that the U.S. could not by itself shut down the transshipment of narcotics through Haiti and that progress could only be achieved through painstaking law-enforcement collaboration.

¶3. (C) President Preval cited "frustration" regarding the continued problem of narcotics transiting Haiti. Citing the 1997 cooperation agreement, which he signed during his first administration and allows U.S. forces to pursue, search, and seize, vessels suspected of transporting narcotics in Haitian territorial waters, Preval asked why the U.S. had not made more progress in interdicting narcotics arriving in Haiti. (Comment: This has become a theme in Preval's discourse regarding the U.S. In another setting he recently noted that the U.S. was "good at catching the boats with people, but didn't seem to care about the boats with drugs." End Comment.) Interrupting the justice minister's discussion of the extradition/removal issue at one point, Preval rhetorically asked his minister what good changing Haitian law would be if the U.S. could not increase interdictions. He expressed skepticism that the HNP could effectively challenge narcotics trafficking within Haiti, downplaying the

PORT AU PR 00002169 002 OF 003

role of the anti-kidnapping unit, and referring to allegations against the HNP's second ranking officer. (Note: Post will report the details of charges against investigative police director Michael Lucius and his ongoing dispute with judicial authorities septel. End Note.)

¶4. (C) Minister of Justice Magloire expressed his appreciation for U.S. law-enforcement assistance, particularly support for the Haitian coast guard. Magloire outlined plans to establish an inter-ministerial task force to better combat illicit trafficking and control the ports and border with the Dominican Republic and his intention to re-establish a special intelligence unit to police the international airport in Port-au-Prince. He indicated his ministry was "considering" the issue of removing Haitian nationals to the United States for prosecutions, noting the Haitian constitution prohibited the extradition of Haitian nationals. In the meantime, he hoped to establish specialized courts and judges to deal with the most serious trafficking offenses. Magloire raised the issue of deportations, claiming that criminal deportees from the United States seriously contributed to criminality in Haiti.

Police Chief Andresol

¶5. (C) HNP Director General Andresol reported that the HNP was completing a registration of HNP officers throughout Haiti in advance of the vetting process, which would begin shortly, starting with himself and other senior officers. He pronounced himself satisfied with the HNP reform plan drafted in conjunction with MINUSTAH, and pointed to better relations with MINUSTAH since the arrival of Deputy UNPol Commissioner for Reform Richard Warren. Implementation of the reform plan, he stated, was a chance to create a "professional police force," which Haiti had never had and an opportunity remove many unprofessional officers from its ranks.

¶6. (C) Andresol accepted A/S Patterson's congratulations on the improvement of HNP performance and his own leadership. Andresol responded that progress was slow and cited a myriad

of difficulties in improving HNP performance. Officers were under equipped and stations were understaffed. The HNP's special units, crowd control (CIMO) and SWAT, were coming under increasing pressure to perform a variety of tasks as they were his most reliable and best-equipped units. CIMO and SWAT patrolled with MINUSTAH in Cite Soleil as they were the only units with armored vehicles. In order to maintain a permanent presence in Cite Soleil, he would require roughly 250 fully equipped regular officers, which he did not have. In the meantime, he had to divert CIMO and SWAT units from their regular responsibilities.

MINUSTAH

17. (SBU) Acting SRSO David Wilmhurst, accompanied by MINUSTAH political chief Gerardo Lechevalier, provided A/S Patterson a list of concerns on the security front that they asked the USG take into account in formulating its assistance. Wilmhurst highlighted the contribution of Creole-speaking UNPOL officers within the U.S. contingent and asked that the U.S. increase their number. He pointed to Haitian lack of capacity to control its ports and borders, citing the arrival the previous day of a cargo ship from Boston in the port of St. Marc that had unloaded its cargo without any government inspection. He also asked for more information sharing between MINUSTAH, the GoH, and the U.S. to better monitor this kind of traffic. Wilmhurst underlined the enormous impact kidnapping had on the security climate, leading A/S Patterson to agree that kidnapping had a particularly adverse impact on foreign investment and tourism.

18. (SBU) In a separate meeting, senior members of the U.S. UNPOL contingent told A/S Patterson that they had witnessed progress related on a number of fronts. Security cooperation with the HNP for the first two rounds of elections worked well and they expected the security plan for the third round on December 3 was well along. A trainer reported that

PORT AU PR 00002169 003 OF 003

INL-funded in-service training in Cap Haitien and Les Cayes concluded successfully. HNP officers were motivated and eager to improve their capacity. An officer advising CIMO reported that the specialized units comprised dedicated officers and that on the whole the HNP had mostly capable officers.

Comment

19. (C) A/S Patterson's visit underscored both the progress and remaining challenges in rebuilding the HNP. On the verge of disintegration in the aftermath of Aristide's departure in February 2004, the HNP is now present on the streets of Port-au-Prince and directly contributing to the improved security atmosphere as a direct result of our training and assistance. Though MINUSTAH efforts to mentor and implement reform have been more halting, MINUSTAH has also achieved significant successes, particularly in training the HNP's specialized units. The challenge to closer cooperation remains with senior government officials, beginning with the president. Preval witnessed first-hand the destruction of the HNP as an institution under Lavalas leadership and is still skeptical that they will ever have the capacity or be sufficiently rid of corruption to tackle powerful criminal interests in Haiti. We need to continue to impress on Preval that his government must allocate sufficient resources to the HNP to make it self-sustaining, and to support and encourage the honest officers within its ranks. Most importantly, we need to make clear to Preval and his security team that neither the U.S. nor any other international partner can help address narcotics, arms and other trans-national crime in Haiti without functioning Haitian law-enforcement institutions and pro-active collaboration of GoH officials. Cooperation on the removal of Haitian nationals to the U.S. to face criminal charges is one of the most important

benchmarks of that collaboration, and post will follow-on A/S
Patterson's visit to attempt to secure GoH cooperation.

SANDERSON